

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY

Purpose

- Portrays people, places, or things with vivid details to help the reader create a mental picture of what is being described
- Involves the reader so that he or she can visualize what or who is being described
- Creates or conveys a dominant impression of what is being described through sensory details
- Can be objective or subjective

Organizational Pattern

- Introduction/Beginning
 - ✓ Establishes the purpose
 - ✓ Sets the tone for the overall impression
 - ✓ May begin with a general statement followed by more specific statements related to the purpose
- Body/Middle
 - ✓ Specific details, examples or reasons
 - ✓ Anecdotes or "narrative chunks" may serve as details or examples
 - ✓ Transitions connect the ideas in a logical way
 - ✓ Transitions assist the flow from paragraph to paragraph
 - ✓ No prescribed number of paragraphs
- Conclusion/End
 - ✓ Gracefully ends the essay
 - ✓ May include a restatement of the writer's opinion or the main idea
 - ✓ May summarize the information given in the body
 - ✓ Reader should have a sense that things are "wrapped up."